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The Edinburgh Legal History Blog

Vesuvius strikes again!

Posted on 21/01/2015 by [Paul J. du Plessis](#)

For those of us interested in legal practice in the Roman world, Vesuvius has long since held an attraction. It was, after all, as a result of the eruption of Vesuvius, that two of the most spectacular finds in Roman-law terms were made, namely the Tablets of the Sulpicii family [which although discovered in the region of Pompeii most likely refer to their moneylending activities in the city] and the archive of the Banker Iucundus whose house still stands in Pompeii. These two archives have done much to enhance modern knowledge of Roman 'commercial law' and the interconnected nature of finance and networks of association. A lesser known fact about Vesuvius is of course that it continues to yield evidence of daily life. Most recently, as reported by the Smithsonian Magazine, new techniques have enabled scholars to begin deciphering a number of carbonised scrolls found in the so-called Villa of the Papyri. While much work remains to be done, it would seem that these scrolls contained philosophical works:

<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/ancient-scrolls-blackened-vesuvius-are-readable-last-herculaneum-papyri-180953950/?no-ist>

Let's hope there are some scrolls on Roman law in there as well.

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